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581 sister, between husband and wife and between cattle-linked cross-cousins,
582 and these links, as well as the whole network of subsidiary links, arise from the implications of marriage and cattle-linking. The brothers who receive the cattle from the sisters return daughters to them and again receive cattle; the brothers become the nucleus of a group providing brides, and hence, from the point of view of the sisters and their children, they are the brides or parents-in-law (vamakhadzi), while the sister's husbands are, from the point of view of the brothers and their children, the group supplying bridegrooms (vatezi) or sons-in-law (vaghakhadzi). The vamakhadzi give brides and receive cattle; the vaghakhadzi give cattle and receive brides.

582 That is the complex network in which cross-cousin marriage is enmeshed. Cattle-linked cross-cousins are said to be 'born for' one another; a man is said to marry where his father has married, a woman is said to go to her father's sister (thus marrying where the latter has married). Actually over 60 per cent. of the men marry the cattle-linked cross-cousin 'born for them'; and she, whether married first or last, becomes the chief wife. This means that she bears the chief son. It may happen that she is not married at all during the lifetime of the man she was 'born for'; she may be too young or he may die prematurely; yet she will be the wife who must, for any important purpose, bear the chief son. If the husband
589 'born for her' has died or never comes into existence, and a successor to him is required in any position of importance, such as headship of a district, she will nevertheless be married to him; the cattle will pass and he who 'enters' will be some one else, chosen not by her, but by the group of the bridegrooms or, more precisely, the house of the non-existent bridegroom (which in practice more often than not means the mistress of that house). Of course, the system is not infallible. When nothing of importance as regards status or position is at stake or, if the girl is headstrong and refuses to allow the chosen one to enter, she may 'pick up children in the bush'. But she has no right to marry any one else, though sometimes she is inherited by the brother of her supposititious spouse as if she were a widow; sometimes she merely goes to cook for her cattle-linked aunt and there bears children as if she were the chief wife of that aunt's son.

It is only a step from this situation to the further elaboration that allows a woman to marry a wife, not for her son, but for herself. If the system logically implies that a woman may have in her service a husbandless daughter-in-law doing all the work of a wife, by a slight extension of this conception she may actually marry a wife. There is ample precedent for this elaboration in the fact that the queen has wives; she is their 'husband' and to the children of her wives she is 'father' (pubabe). This model is followed by other women, especially women of importance and women who, as doctors and potters, have cattle of their own with which to obtain wives. In general, however, such women call their wife 'daughter-in-law', as though they had been married, not for themselves, but on behalf of a son.

582 It is not only these peculiar elaborations that result from the pivotal institutions of cattle-linked brother and sister and 'being born' for one

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587 and the *mayusulo* must be returned. But it is only at the stage where
768 interrelations have become intolerably strained that the widower can demand back his cattle. The law thus is that a man who has lost his wife has no right to demand a substitute; but if it appears that his parents-in-law maliciously refuse to give him one, in circumstances that break the bonds established by the *mayusulo*, he may do so.

Substitutions have to be distinguished from inheritances of spouses, for the latter is not spoken of as marriage at all; it is '*ku khwa*', to hand over or allocate, and implies looking after. Among some of the neighbouring tribes, a man may, on the death of the brother, inherit the wife of his brother, both of his elder or his younger brother. Among the Lovedu the theoretical rule is that only a younger brother may inherit an elder brother's wife; but sometimes, if the parties agree, it is the elder brother who inherits. Among some tribes a man cannot inherit his father's wives, unless they are wives that have not yet actually been married. Among them the supreme vice, the sin that disqualifies even the heir to the throne, is to 'spoil' the wives of their father. Among the Lovedu the two things are not interconstructed, and a man may inherit any of his deceased father's wives, if he calls them *nnamai* (little mother), which implies that they are wives junior to his mother. A woman may inherit
• [588] wives just as she may marry them, especially the widow of her cattle-linked brother, but also the widow of her elder or of her younger brother. There are no rigid rules as regards inheritance of wives; if a man's younger brothers are preferred to his sons and the latter are preferred to the sons of the younger brothers, the actual arrangements are in essence determined by the deceased's cattle-linked sister, who officiates but acts upon the advice of her father's brother or her own brothers and sisters. It is all a matter of agreement. There is no institutionalized method whereby the inherited wives may signify their approval or disapproval, but in practice they are exceedingly independent, almost invariably remain in their own village wherever the man who inherits them may be, and not infrequently become everybody's prey. They sometimes marry wives of their own, which releases them from undue dependence upon their inheritors, who are, however, obliged to assist them in the things that men do. Sometimes their gardens and houses, just as their beer drinks and entertainments, are markedly superior to those of married women; for they are able to accept favours from numerous admirers. And on the whole the lot of a widow is not an unenviable one.

A man cannot inherit his mother's sister, nor can he inherit the wife of a son of his mother's sister. Such arrangements would be incongruous with the *mayusulo* complex, for 'two sisters cannot eat one another's property'. Nor may a father inherit his son's wife; it would upset the hierarchical arrangement of the society. Again, a man cannot inherit his mother's brother's wife, evenn if she is not the mother of his own wife. It is also curious that the Lovedu do not attach great importance to seed-raising. They speak of 'raising seed to the family' (*ku dzosa mulogo*) when a girl marries at her cattle-linkedd aunt's, and that is the primary meaning of the phrase. A younger brotheer who takes his elder brother's widow

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *mawusalo* scheme.

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagumbi, a man of thirty-five, scorned to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*mugwalo*) has in practice a high status.

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *mugwalo*, and when he died the *mugwalo* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *mugwalo* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *mugwalo* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *mugwalo* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, even jealousies, between a man and his *mugwalo* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Muhale complained, not that his son was living with a *mugwalo*, but that the *mugwalo's* laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *mugwalo* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. A man who illicitly lives upon a woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*mudilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father of the porridge bowls' (*rumudilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *mawusalo* and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *mawusalo* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *mawusalo* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

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queen's mother—that is, either the queen's predecessor on the throne or, if she has borne no children, the queen's physiological mother. The unofficial husbands of the queens are brothers chosen from the line of Malegudu (elder brother of Mujaji I), but relationship is not reckoned through them as fathers. Closeness of relationship is important, but personality and opportunity count as much. The most influential councillor is often said to be the queen's mother's brother—in other words, the brother of the deceased queen or, if she has no issue, the brother of the wife of the queen who bore the queen. In fact, however, other relatives rise to equally influential positions. To take a concrete instance, the councillors of Mujaji III have been relatives either through Leakhali, chief wife and 'sister' of Mujaji II and physiological mother of Mujaji III, or through Mujaji II, her mother, Mujaji I, and the latter's brothers, such as Malegudu. Muneri, the chief councillor to-day, is Leakhali's uterine brother's son, and before him there were Mulogwane, uterine brother of the queen, and also Leakhali's uterine brother. Earlier still, but in the present queen's time, the greatest councillors were others tracing descent from Malegudu. There is no precise rule either as to the number or identity of the councillors. The *duma* of the queen should not be a relative; he is merely a messenger, and, unlike the *induna* elsewhere, is of no account, having no special legal or other status or function.

The *khotla* is neither the more or less determinate body of private advisers (*kxotla*), nor even the tribal gathering (*pitsho*), of the Sotho. It is mainly constituted by district heads, or their representatives, and the men of the capital, but any one attends; and it is never conceived of as a general assembly of all the initiated men of the tribe. It has little power and less initiative; it is summoned mostly to discuss European matters, and there is now a tendency to place some decisions of the men of the capital before it for confirmation; but it is hardly a means of gauging popular feeling or of expressing the royal will. The co-operation of the tribe is secured and its desires made known, not through the *khotla*, but through other social arrangements, which we shall describe at greater length.

These arrangements run parallel with a distinctive system of wives of the queen, called *vatanomi*, a term also applied to the wives of all nobles and women other than the queen may have *vatanomi*. The majority of the queen's wives are given to her by her district heads. In a sense, these wives are tribute (*va hu lova*), but the queen always gives some *munyualo*. She also receives wives from foreign chiefs who supplicate for rain or for peace, and from headmen who settle in her country and send their daughters or sisters; in these cases no *munyualo* is given. Finally, she is sent wives by the nobles, by those to whom she has given wives or cattle with which to secure wives, and by those who promise their little 'mud-stampers' as repayment for the assistance they ask. Sometimes also the queen takes a liking to a girl and asks her in marriage and sometimes commoners send their daughters. It will be impracticable to deal with all these cases; and, from the point of view of the political organization, we are mainly concerned with the wives sent by district heads. They send their daughters for purposes of *hu lova*, a word used in a wide

[marriage cattle, See cat. 583 per detail.—Analyst]

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connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain. District heads *lova* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Vuloyedu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*hu lova*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Tonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of marriage and *munywalo*; the *munywalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own hut (and in the old days a cow into the bargain) and be allowed to cohabit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private councils of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Vaṭanoni* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *vaṭanoni*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads.

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *muṭanoni* to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. Only some of the *vaṭanoni* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *vaṭanoni* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves Mujaji and they are described as 'the heads of Muhale', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing.

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noblemen she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *munywalo* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *munywalo* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *munywalo* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.'

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

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ease of presentation. Mavetha, district head of Mareroni, some thirty-eight years ago gave his daughter, Muthatso, to the queen. Muthatso after a time was allotted to Khidima, the queen's maternal uncle. Later Khidima sent a daughter to be one of the wives of the queen and this girl in turn was given by the queen to Nagambi, district head of Maulwi. Meanwhile Mavetha's son, Muhale, succeeded at Mareroni and sent the only issue of his wife, the daughter Makwajo, to the queen (1936). The next ruler at Mareroni will be either Makwajo or an heir raised by the wife acquired with the cattle given by the queen as *munywalo* for Mukwajo. Already these arrangements link the district heads of Marenoni and of Maulwi with the queen and one of her nobles, and also with one another. The network is indefinitely continued in all directions, and though its ends appear to diverge, they centre in the queen and become interlinked at many points. For instance, to Rasodi, a younger brother of Nagambi, the queen gave Makwada, her wife, who came from Malematsha, an important district head, and as a result Rasodi's son must marry at Malematsha's. Once these interrelations are established, they set into motion the whole social system and the reciprocities which double the links and perpetuate the interrelations. In the district of the capital the ramifications of exchanges and re-exchanges are so complex as to defy analysis.

Broadly speaking, districts may be divided into those given to one of the old *kwevo* or royal groups (of Muhale, of Mudiga and of Mahasha), those originating from *vafanoni*, and those held by heads of foreign groups. The so-called *vafanoni* districts constitute a composite group, because women do not normally succeed to one another. We have already mentioned elsewhere how the district Matsui was given by Mujaji I to her wife, who, marrying a Crocodile, was succeeded by her son Matsui and his line of Crocodiles. In 34 per cent. of the 100 districts we know well enough to trace their origin, the position has not been very different. To-day sixty of these 100 districts are held by the royal groups and forty by foreign groups, and of those held by foreigners sixteen were acquired, as Matsui was, through *vafanoni*. Thus 40 per cent. of the foreign and 30 per cent. of the *kwevo* districts, as far as we know, were originally handed to wives of the chiefs. Districts may originate in many other ways. It was customary for the kings to place their districts under sisters and brothers and temporarily also under their wives. Their wives could not as easily as among the queens consolidate their position, as they were unable to send their daughters as wives to the king, whereas now they can and do send such wives to the queens. Districts were also given to the great messengers (*diduna*) of the chiefs; to foreigners, who, though they came with no large following, were renowned doctors of the national 'schools', some of which they introduced; to men who gave the queen cattle and a wife, and occasionally to those who had rendered services of value.

It does not much matter how a district originates from the point of view of the links that are gradually established with the queen and with one another. If foreigners come with a large, compact body of followers, they are often given an area and in return send their daughters as wives

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643 789 766 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 588 644 [557] Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men, and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring [551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the village and permission to have children. [565] A *mothanoni* of noble birth ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do [184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's [171] mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage,

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mother's brother's daughter, and in contrast to all surrounding Sotho tribes, Pedi to the south and Highveld tribes to the west where it is common, marriage with the father's brother's daughter is not considered possible. Cross-cousin marriage with the father's sister's daughter is known only among the Lobedu, where it is common within the royal clan, Khaha, where it is rare, and Moila's Venda. The prevalence of marriage with the mother's brother's daughter by which a girl is said to be 'born for' a son of a certain house and knows all her life she will marry there, has been a stabilizing influence leading to very much less illegitimacy resulting from the absence in towns of young men than is found in other areas where this type of marriage has broken down. A girl knows she will have to 'cook for' her father's sister, her future mother-in-law (indeed there is a definite moral value attached to this), and even in the absence of her husband-to-be will be married by the family. If, as a young married woman she has a child in the absence of her husband, it is an irregularity without serious social consequences. On the death of a spouse, sororate and levirate are common; marriage with the wife's brother's daughter is found where the wife is barren or dead, and full inheritance of a young wife of one's own father is quite common.

The custom of a woman being 'married' by a woman, so common in the Lowveld, is one often misunderstood by Europeans. Since a girl is 'born for' the son of her father's sister whose cattle made her father's marriage and her own birth possible, her father's sister may, even if she has no son, nevertheless 'marry' the girl, who will come and cook for her and have children by some appointed relative or by private lovers of her own choice. It is possible, though much rarer, for a woman rich in cattle to 'marry' a non-relative.

Though in the Lowveld as elsewhere the person responsible for payment of bride-price in a man's first marriage is his father or guardian and brothers and sisters are usually coupled, the cattle for the girl being used by the boy, it is not customary in the Lowveld, as is the case elsewhere, for any other relative to contribute. Here, when a man has no cattle, instead of begging from various relatives, he will proceed to 'show the knee' to a man rich in cattle, i.e., he will borrow cattle on the understanding that his first daughter will

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creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and realignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion.

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vamalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vamukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsezi*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaduhulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin.

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's

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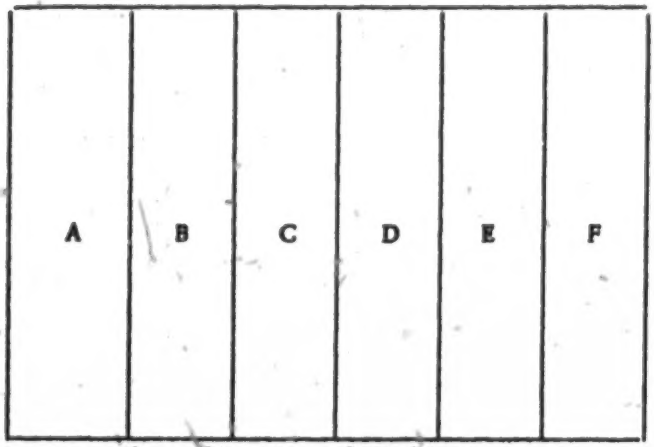

Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.

[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-195. See category 116. --Analyst]

[Facing kinship diagram.]

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units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen. Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1943 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

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ance against future want by building up relations of friendship and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintaining social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples. Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies. She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a *thari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. *'Ge loda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga masadi a de a nthsidelo*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

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I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *nowi* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mosha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

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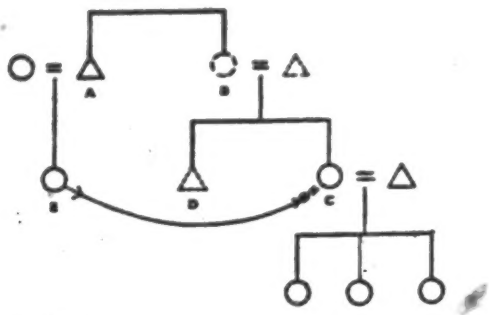

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepize's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepize (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepize's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepize and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepize (*o mo bekile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepize (E) not '*noeji*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mohadibo*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

(*monna wa ka*) by their '*wives*' *batanomi* when they marry on behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maseriba's bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batamedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maseriba because she is *khadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho ruka leloko*)'. This desire to keep alive the links between brother and sister and to maintain and renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dsosa moloko*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations connected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 2a), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1930's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

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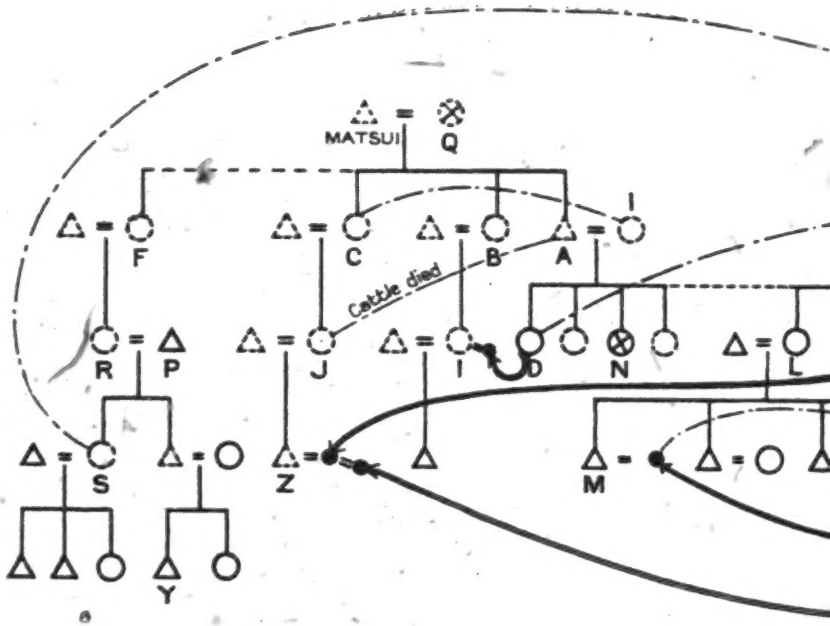

△ ○ Indicates deceased.
Indicates half-siblings.
Indicates full siblings.
● Indicates preferred wife.

[p. 192-A]

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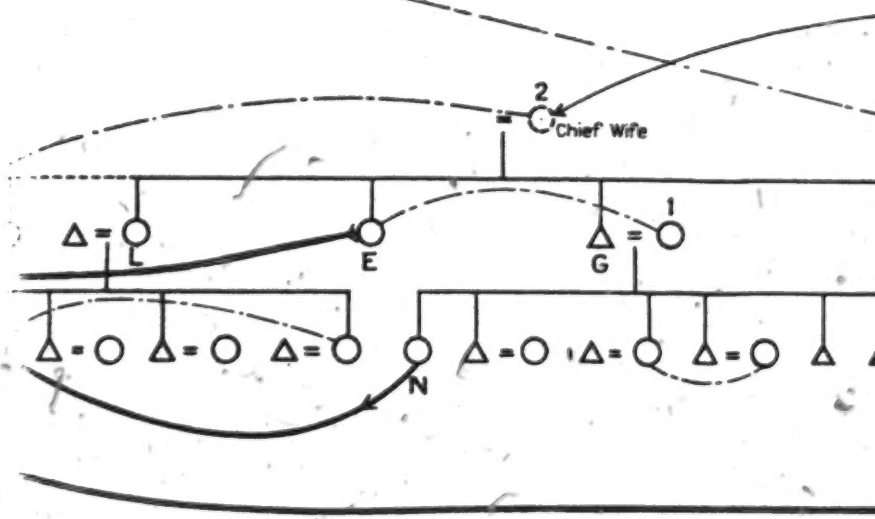

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a woman in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wive
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her de

Indicates woman marriage of a girl with a married female relation.

Indicates a woman who is or has been a motanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[illegible]-B

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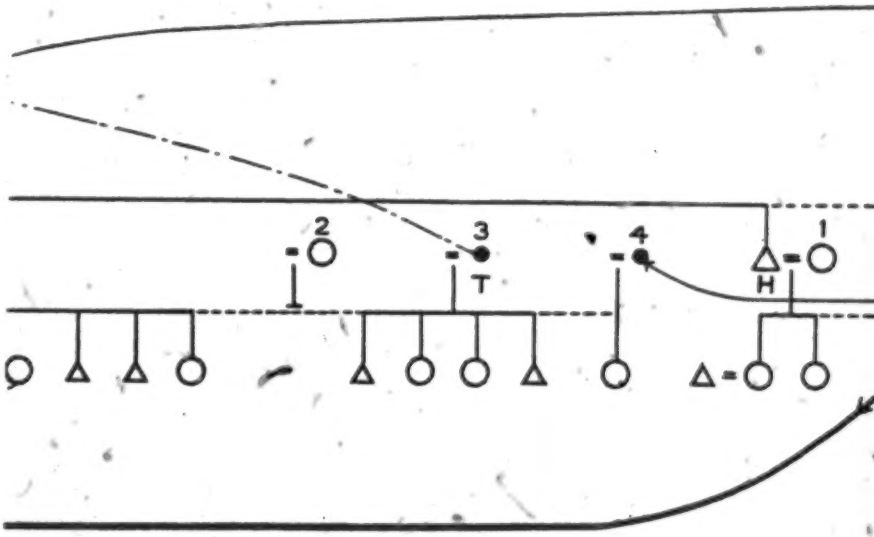

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
ncoming wives from the same lineage.
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the queen.

FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a line

[p. 192-C]

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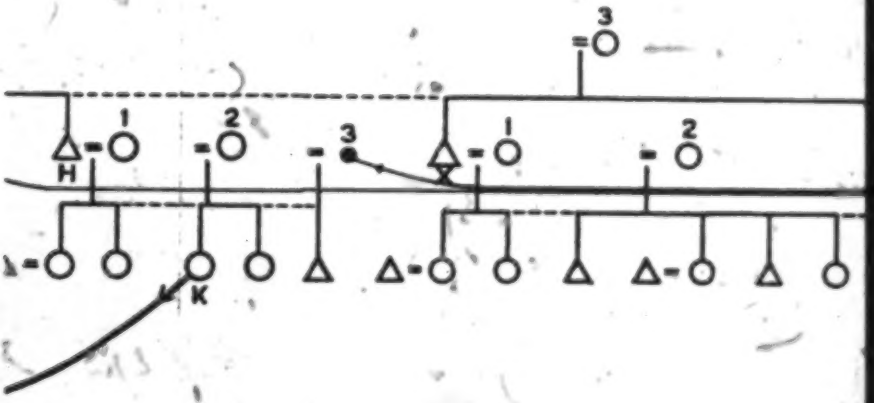

e links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-D]

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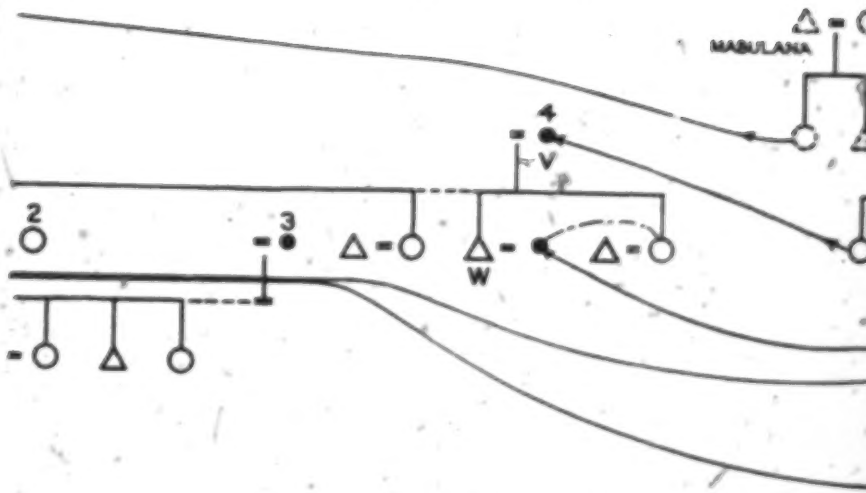

[Q. 192-E]

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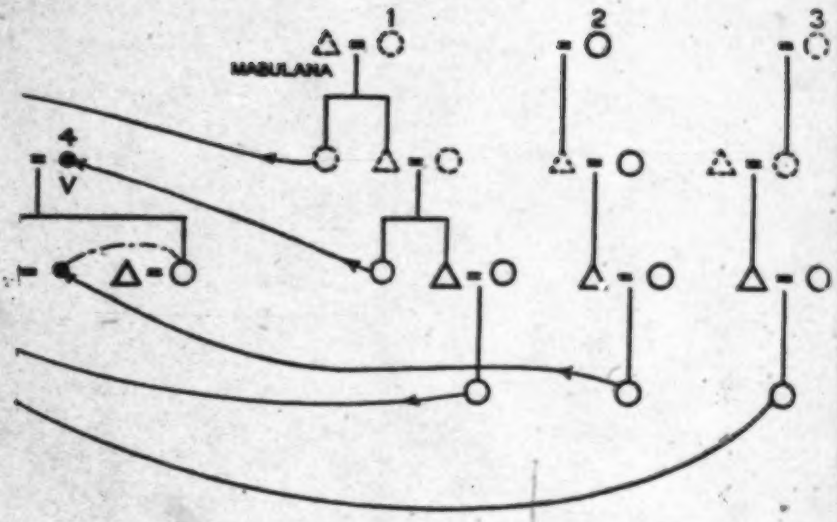

[192-F]

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582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realizing he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

● 588 591 [634] (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I; that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *matsesi* of the queen.

613 582 588 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.